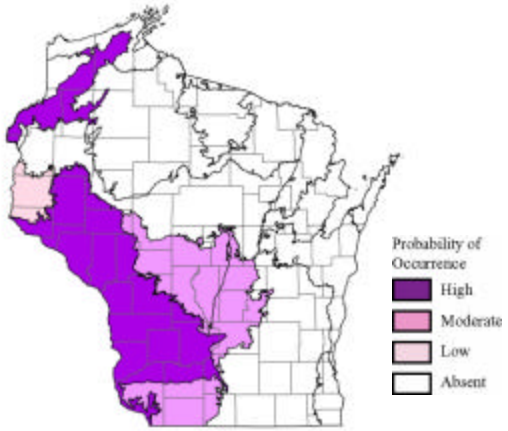
Bullsnake (*Pituophis catenifer sayi*)

Species Assessment Scores*

State rarity:	4
State threats:	5
State population trend:	5
Global abundance:	3
Global distribution:	4
Global threats:	4
Global population trend:	4
Mean Risk Score:	4.1
Area of importance:	2

* Please see the Description of Vertebrate Species Summaries (Section 3.1.1) for definitions of criteria and scores.



Ecological Landscape Associations
Please note that this is not a range map. Shading does not imply that the species is present throughout the Landscape, but represents the probability that the species occurs somewhere in the Landscape.

Landscape -community Combinations of Highest Ecological Priority

Ecological Landscape	Community
Central Sand Plains	Dry cliff
Northwest Sands	Pine barrens
Western Coulee and Ridges	Bedrock glade
Western Coulee and Ridges	Cedar glade
Western Coulee and Ridges	Dry cliff
Western Coulee and Ridges	Dry prairie
Western Coulee and Ridges	Dry-mesic prairie
Western Coulee and Ridges	Oak barrens
Western Coulee and Ridges	Oak opening
Western Coulee and Ridges	Oak woodland
Western Coulee and Ridges	Sand prairie

Threats and Issues

- Habitat loss from conversion of bluffland and sand prairie habitats to agricultural lands and urban and residential development threatens this species.
- Habitat for this species is degraded by the encroachment of red cedar and other woody species into bluff and sand prairies (unchecked natural succession).
- Habitat fragmentation may severely limit long-term population maintenance. Very large tracts of intact habitat (e.g., 2000 to 3000 contiguous acres) are needed to perpetuate populations.
- Mortality from agricultural equipment is a threat to bullsnakes.
- Human persecution is an issue for bullsnakes.
- Over-collecting of bullsnakes for the pet trade has been significant in some areas.
- Spotted knapweed, a non-native invasive plant, has the potential to reduce carrying capacity for bullsnakes through habitat simplification that may impact rodent populations. This appears to be an imminent threat.

- Motorized recreation may damage sensitive prairie and bluffland habitats used by bullsnakes.
- Road mortality from increased roads and associated traffic is an issue for bullsnakes.

Priority Conservation Actions

- Acquiring and or protecting additional bluff and sand prairie habitat would benefit this species and others that share this habitat.
- Reversing the negative effects on these species from canopy closure associated with natural succession on public and private land, particularly in bluff habitats where this species was once very abundant, is necessary to help stabilize and recover populations.
- Landowner education is needed to accomplish habitat restoration work on private lands. One avenue for this is through rare snake workshops.
- Long term monitoring is needed to evaluate the status of bullsnakes in Wisconsin and to track trends of representative populations.
- Landowner incentive programs may help promote management of appropriate habitats on private lands. Additional funding for these programs is needed. It is important to link incentive programs to education programs which help inform landowners of the mutual benefits of managing habitats.
- Partnering with prairie restoration groups like The Prairie Enthusiasts will help accomplish land management more efficiently.
- Partnerships with local universities and colleges are needed to conduct needed research and share the associated costs. Presenting research findings at local universities may increase interest in such partnerships, leading to additional research that may benefit the species.